

The Voice for Military Families

NEWSLETTER VOL. 14, NO. 6

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NMFA 
The National Military Family Association
Serving the families of the seven uniformed services:
Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard,
Public Health Service, National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration

AWAG MAKES THE PIECES FIT

Barbara Lee Williams, NMFA President

Held for the last time against the backdrop of the snow-capped mountains, clear skies and blue water of Bavaria's Lake Chiemsee, the American Women's Activities, Germany (AWAG) Conference provided NMFA with a golden opportunity to take the pulse of the U.S. military community in Europe. NMFA President Barbara Williams and Director of Government Relations Joyce Wessel Raezer conducted a legislative update and a session about NMFA at the May conference, which was attended by representatives of military spouse clubs and family readiness groups from across Europe. The conference featured several distinguished speakers, including U.S. Ambassador to Germany Dan Coates; Patty Shinseki, spouse of Army Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki; General B.B. Bell, Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army (USAREUR); Major General Kathryn Frost, Commander of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES); and Dr. Mary Keller, Executive Director of the Military Child Education Coalition.



NMFA President Barbara Williams (center) distributes NMFA surveys to AWAG delegates in the buffet line.

The wide range of break-out sessions provided delegates with training for spouse club board positions, information on programs and initiatives affecting military families in Europe, as well as opportunities for personal and professional growth. Among the discussions at the conference:

- ☆ Family readiness is a necessary component of mission readiness. Ah said Patty Shinseki. Mrs. Shinseki also noted the importance of reliable information for military families and highlighted successful Army initiatives for families, such as the in-state tuition and Senior Stabilization ini-

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NMFA Visits Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

Joyce Raezer, Director, Government Relations

The TriWest beneficiary advisory meeting was held Month, Day, Year, in conjunction with a visit by representatives of several military associations to the TriWest headquarters and Davis-Monthan.

TriWest officials, medical staff from the 355th, local Congressional staff, and local representatives of military associations and installation organizations attended the meeting. Among the attendees were NMFA Representatives Wanda Allen-Yearout and Donna and Gary Lium. While in Arizona, association representatives also received updates from TriWest executives regarding operations



NMFA Government Relations Director Joyce Raezer and CEO of TriWest Healthcare Alliance David McIntire listen as Col. Carl Alley (far right), Commander of the 355th Medical Group at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, responds to beneficiary questions at a meeting in Tucson, AZ.

in the TRICARE Central Region. NMFA thanks TriWest for arranging this very informative visit. 



From the President's Desk

"...When Johnny Comes Marching Home"

Recently, as the carrier, U.S.S Abraham Lincoln, returned from Iraq, President George Bush stood on its deck to praise her sailors and Marines and to declare an end to hostilities in Iraq. Soon the airwaves were filled with scenes of tearful, but joyous, family reunions in San Diego and in many other places where troops returned. The Civil War song verse, "...When Johnny Comes Marching Home" came to mind. The scenes touched America's heart, but when the cameras were turned off, you could almost hear the sound of the country turning its attention to other matters. The military family would no longer be the focus of attention.

The sad fact is that hundreds of troops are not marching home, and many are only now deploying. Separation and sacrifice are the order of the day for thousands of military families. In Germany, while attending the American Women's Activities, Germany (AWAG) conference, I had the privilege of meeting many young wives who are in the "enduring it" mode. Thirteen years ago at the end of Desert Storm, I was in that mode myself. Many of the troops came home, but my Marine group and countless others remained in Kuwait for months. It was a particularly lonely and difficult time for me. I wanted to shout, "It's not over for me!" In fact, dear friends and the generous support of a few Marines in the group (who returned to prepare for a routine deployment!) helped me through, but it was hard.

So, my message to you is to rejoice in the safe return of many of our brave soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen, reservists, and guardsmen. Join us in waving flags and celebrating Iraqi freedom. But, let us remember that American servicemen and women are still deployed in harm's way today and every day. Thousands of American families are separated. Until the day when "...When Johnny Comes Marching Home," hold them in your hearts and prayers.

Sincerely yours,

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars...

Flag Day
June 14

Father's Day
June 15

First Day of Summer
June 21

The National Military Family Association, Inc., is a nonprofit organization representing families of the seven uniformed services and active duty, reserve component, and retired servicemembers. If credited to NMFA, contents of this newsletter may be reproduced or reprinted.

OFFICERS

President	Barbara Williams
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Treasurer	Tom Sims
Vice President Development	Tom Stanners
Vice President Government Relations	Paul Arcari
Vice President Public Relations, Marketing, and Membership	Vacant
Vice President Volunteer Services and Representatives	Diane Altenberg

PRIVACY POLICY

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is aware of the need to keep private information secure and confidential. We consider this a top priority.

We do not collect any information about you that can identify you as an individual except for the information collected to acquire membership. We do not share any of your personal information with any other group, and NMFA does not sell any names or mailing lists to outside groups.

Moving? Send NMFA your new address!

Membership is \$20 per year and may be paid at the address below. Postmaster: Send address changes to NMFA, 2500 North Van Dorn St., Suite 102, Alexandria, VA 22302-1601. (ISSN# 1075-0975)

National Military Family Association
2500 North Van Dorn St., Suite 102
Alexandria, VA 22302-1601
Phone: 703-931-6632 Fax: 703-931-4600
E-mail: families@nmfa.org

NMFA Announces New Benefits and Giving Levels

NMFA is pleased to announce our revamped 2003 corporate and spouse club giving levels and benefit packages.

Corporate Benefits

In addition to the items listed below, your corporation will have the opportunity to showcase its support of the military community, access to NMFA's considerable expertise on the military family and recognition on NMFA website, under the Contributor's Corner, and in the Annual Appreciation Listing. (Call to inquire about special non-profit rates.)

Family Supporter (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

- ☆ 2 invitations to the NMFA Congressional Reception

Family Advocate (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

- ☆ 5 invitations to the NMFA Congressional Reception
- ☆ Complimentary ticket to other NMFA's networking events

Family Guardian (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

- ☆ 7 invitations to the NMFA Congressional Reception
- ☆ Complimentary tickets to NMFA's networking events
- ☆ Public recognition at NMFA events, such as fundraisers, conferences, the Gala, etc.

Family Patron (\$10,000 - \$19,999)

- ☆ 10 invitations to the NMFA Congressional Reception and complimentary tickets to NMFA's networking events
- ☆ Article recognizing your company in this newsletter
- ☆ Recognition in extended format on NMFA website
- ☆ Public recognition and V.I.P. seating at NMFA events
- ☆ Joint-inclusion in Defense Weekly recognition announcement

Family Champion (\$20,000+)

- ☆ 10 invitations to the NMFA Congressional Reception and complimentary tickets to NMFA's networking events
- ☆ Article recognizing your company in this newsletter
- ☆ Recognition in extended format on NMFA website
- ☆ Public recognition and V.I.P. seating at NMFA event
- ☆ NMFA Press Release highlighting your company's support of military families

Contributor's Corner

NMFA APPRECIATES ITS SUPPORTERS

The continued generosity of the business community greatly assists NMFA in fulfilling its mission. Our current efforts involve aggressively advocating for improvements in the quality of military family life as well as for developing educational programs to inform family members about their rights, benefits, and the impact of current events on their lives. We wish to extend a special "Thank You" to our most recent contributors:

Donations

Beachdirectory.com

Beachdirectory.com is a website providing visitor information about all of Florida's beach communities and the Florida Keys. Owners Thomas and Jennifer Rask decided to support NMFA to show their appreciation for our brave troops and their families.

Dallas Stars Foundation

The Dallas Stars Foundation, a non-profit venture of the NHL team, focuses its efforts on providing support to children so they may lead quality lives and develop into contributing members of society

Make Sense Foundation

The Make Sense Foundation is a non-profit organization created by the owners of SeneGense Cosmetics to help those committed to assisting families, especially women and children in crisis.

In-Kind Donations

AmpliVox Sound Systems

AmpliVox donated a portable public address system that will allow NMFA staff to more effectively communicate our mission when speaking to large groups while traveling.

Contact Kathleen Burke or Miranda Willis in NMFA's Development Department to donate or for more information at 703-931-6632.

- ☆ Recognition of your company's support in a Defense Weekly announcement

Spouse Club and Thrift Shop Benefits

NMFA counts on the loyal support of spouse clubs and thrift shops to achieve our mission. In return for their support, member clubs and shops receive the following benefits from NMFA.

Family Supporter (\$50+)

- ☆ Newsletter (electronic/print options)
- ☆ Monthly e-News
- ☆ Eligibility to submit Very Important Patriot (VIP) program nominations
- ☆ Monthly e-Legislative Update
- ☆ NMFA membership presented to Soldier/Sailor/Airman/Marine of the Year (to be given by club, but paid for by NMFA)
- ☆ Inclusion on general list of club donors on NMFA website
- ☆ Annual newsletter recognition

Family Advocate (\$100+)

All benefits pertaining to \$50+ clubs *plus*

- ☆ Link from NMFA website to club's website, or contact information included on NMFA website

- ☆ NMFA membership presented to NCO of the Year (to be given by the club, but paid for by NMFA)

Family Guardian (\$250+)

All benefits pertaining to \$100+ clubs *plus*

- ☆ NMFA memberships presented to installation Volunteers of the Year – one for youth volunteer's family, one for adult volunteer's family (to be given by the club, but paid for by NMFA)


Family Patron (\$500+)

All benefits pertaining to \$250+ clubs *plus*

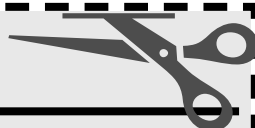
- ☆ Recognition in NMFA newsletter in format highlighting recent club efforts

Family Champion (\$1,000+)

All benefits pertaining to \$250+ clubs *plus*

- ☆ Visit from NMFA headquarters representative (legislative or general update) to installation (CONUS) or club may decide to send representative from installation to NMFA Representative Conference 

CLIP AND SAVE



Clip and Save Committee, Theresa Donahoe, Chairperson

Vacation Opportunities on a Budget

Whether in the middle of a PCS move, a stressful assignment or a seemingly endless deployment, military families are always searching for that dream vacation spot to spend precious and hard earned leave. The following web sites provide selected avenues for discovering that perfect vacation spot on a military budget.

Brenco Tours and Travel

Call 800-211-5107 or access www.militaryrates.net to enjoy significant military discounts to travel destinations around the globe.

Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Links

Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard —

www.recreation.gov/faqmilitarymwr.cfm

Armed Forces Recreation Centers (AFRC) —

www.armymwr.com/portal/travel/recreationcenters

Spotlighting quality resorts at discounted rates, AFRCs offer military families excellent facilities in prime locations. AFRCs are located in Germany, Korea, Hawaii and Florida. Reservations often may be made up to a year in advance and may include extended eligibility for immediate family members traveling with military ID cardholders.

Navy Information, Ticket and Travel —

www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/itt.html

A resource primarily designed for Navy personnel in the region, this site offers information about travel and hotels in South East Asia.

Military-Friendly Commercial Hotels and Resorts —

www.armymwr.com/portal/travel/travelresources/hotels.asp

The Army MWR web site provides this listing of commercial hotels and resorts that offer “substantial discounted rates” to military families. Links are provided to accommodation websites. Toll-free numbers are available for reservations, room availability and rates.

Less Populated Areas or Outdoor Vacations —

For families who prefer less populated areas or outdoor vacation opportunities, the following links provide access to campsites and cabins available through the various services. Often these accommodations are limited in number but offer secluded, non-touristy getaways.

U.S. Coast Guard Recreation Areas	www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/mwr/CGmwr.htm
Navy MWR Cabins and Camp Sites	www.mwr.navy.mil/mwrprgms/cabin.htm
Paths Across America	www.armymwr.com/portal/travel/paths

Lodging Facilities —

For those families who plan vacations near military communities, the following sites provide information on military lodging on or near installations. While personnel on orders receive first preference, military lodging offers a discounted means to enjoy area attractions all over the world, particularly during non-peak PCS times.

Army	www.armymwr.com/portal/travel/travelresources/lodgingcampingRV.asp
Air Force	www-p.afsv.af.mil/LD
Navy	www.navy-lodge.com

Space A Travel Guides —

www.militaryliving.com
www.spaceatravel.com 

AWAG Makes the Pieces Fit

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tatives. Under Senior Stabilization, soldiers may apply to remain in one location for their children's junior and senior high school years. To date, 2,220 applications for stabilization have been approved.

☆ Diana Ohman, Director of Department of Defense Schools in Europe (DoDDS), heard participants' concerns, especially about high school programs and this year's budget cuts. She shared the good news of the DoD Education Activity's upcoming 5-year initiative to improve staffing and program offerings in DoD high schools.

☆ According to General Bell, almost half of the 62,000 soldiers assigned to USAREUR are deployed. He assured delegates concerned by press reports about possible closure of installations in Germany that, while the decision-making process concerning downsizing is complicated, the military would not leave the families Åghigh and dry.

☆ Major General Frost, fresh from a visit to some of AAFES's more remote exchanges in Europe, discussed the link between the exchange service and military families. Military families, she said, Ågwork to stretch a budget, love unconditionally, invest in the future, and stay together wherever they are sent. Åh AAFES is the largest employer of military spouses in DoD and wants to be responsive to customer concerns: General Frost announced that she reads every AAFES comment card.

While enjoying the break from their routines at home, delegates to this year's conference could never completely leave worries of deployed spouses and children left with neighbors behind. The hotel's internet café remained busy throughout the day as delegates checked on e-mails both from the frontlines and the homefront.

At each AWAG Conference, NMFA asks delegates to complete a survey, providing information about their satisfaction with the military and their military community and also about their concerns as military family members. As in past AWAG surveys, this year's delegates gave high marks to the opportunities for travel and the strong sense of community among military families in Europe. Survey answers illustrate some of the difficulties facing families as installations in Europe continue to downsize. While delegates spoke highly of the sense of community found at smaller installations, they also

It all Started With a Simple Idea

Miranda Willis, Deputy Director, Development

Great things stem from a conversation between friends

In December 2002, Joann Patton, and Ellen Houlihan, took a simple idea and turned it into a fun and successful fundraising event to benefit NMFA. You could too!

The West Point Society of New England (WPSNE), wanting to look beyond the walls of the West Point family and reach out to the broader community of military families, held a fun and successful silent auction on March 29, 2003. The event was held in conjunction with the WPSNE annual dinner and raised \$5,500 in proceeds that were generously donated to NMFA. Thanks to the efforts of Ellen, working

with Dale Kurtz as Event Co-Chairs; Bob Cornier; Ed Colasso; and Nicole Demaria; seventeen donated items ranging from a cord of seasoned firewood to a pair of Red Sox tickets all brought in higher than retail value contributions.

The purchasers, excited at having been given the opportunity to help NMFA, voiced a great satisfaction at the outcome. You too can stir up that same excitement among those in your community! If you know of an upcoming event and would like to promote NMFA's mission or to donate proceeds to NMFA, please contact our development department at 703-931-6632. We would be happy to provide you

with any tools we have available to make your event a success — for you and for NMFA.

... Or what can grow from there

Co Chairman of the Silent Auction, Dale Kurtz also thought of a fun and easy way to donate to NMFA while improving employee satisfaction at his office of Sun Life of America. On March 28, 2003 a Jeans Day was held at Sun Life with employees charged \$1.00 for the privilege of wearing jeans to work. The proceeds resulted in an impressive additional \$1,600 donation to NMFA. Thanks for the creative thinking Dale! 🇺🇸

AWAG Makes the Pieces Fit

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raised concerns about the difficulties in small communities: fewer high school course offerings and programs, limited product selection in smaller commissaries and exchanges and greater difficulty accessing health care. They also referenced security concerns about living overseas and about the uncertainties their communities faced as policymakers debate the future force structure and location in Europe.



NMFA President Barbara Williams learns about exotic produce at the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) European Region's AWAG workshop. DeCA-Europe's sessions are always among the most popular at AWAG.

The information NMFA staff gains by talking with AWAG delegates and participating in the conference is always beneficial, both for NMFA and the families it serves. NMFA congrat-



NMFA Government Relations Director Joyce Raezer (far left) and NMFA President Barbara Williams (fourth from left), accompanied by Kelly Gemin (fifth from left), heard from the staff of the Dexheim Army Community Services about programs which are in place to help families of deployed servicemembers.

ulates the AWAG Board of Governors for a successful and enjoyable conference!

NMFA Visit to Wiesbaden Communities

Following the AWAG Conference, NMFA President Barbara Williams and Government Relations Director Joyce Raezer enjoyed the opportunity to visit U.S. military communities in the Wiesbaden, Germany area. Arranged by NMFA Representative Kelly Gemin, the visit included a VIP tour of local quality of life facilities conducted by Deborah Hurley, Deputy Director of Community Activities for the 221st Base Support Battalion (BSB), based in Wiesbaden. Also participating in the tour were Maria Elena Sanchez, spouse of 1st Armored


Division Commander Major General Ricardo Sanchez, and Debbie Flake, spouse of the Division's Chief of Staff, Colonel Jackson Flake.

Highlights of the tour included lunch in the Wiesbaden Commissary and a visit to the Dexheim community. Most of the approximately 1,000 soldiers living in Dexheim have only recently deployed to the Gulf. The Army Community Services staff shared information about the special programs in place for the families, including family readiness group activities, video teleconferencing, and computer access. Because of NMFA's involvement in obtaining Congressional authorization for the Womens, Infants and Childrens (WIC) Overseas program, it was also a pleasure for Joyce and Barbara to meet with the local WIC Overseas director and hear how the program supports 260 families in Dexheim. They were also pleased to hear of the close partnership between the WIC Overseas and New Parent Support Programs in the community. Joyce and Barbara also attended a potluck dinner where families videotaped messages to their deployed servicemembers.

Now, more than ever, military families need support programs and staff to help them deal with the demands of military life. NMFA is grateful to the staff of the quality of life programs and the family volunteers in communities like Wiesbaden who are making life better for military families! 🇺🇸

Legislative Report

Armed Services Committees Mark Up NDAA



The Senate and House Armed Services Committees (SASC, HASC) completed work on their versions of the FY 2004 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) in mid-May. At press time, Committee leaders planned to bring the bills to the floor of their respective Houses before Memorial Day. Both Houses included some of the same provisions in their respective bills (**indicates provision was requested by the Administration*):

- ☆ Increased funding for the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to reduce average out-of-pocket costs for the housing standard for each rank to 3.5 percent*
- ☆ Unlimited commissary access for Guard and Reserve members and their families
- ☆ \$1.69 billion for operations and \$118.4 million for construction and renovation of DoD schools*

Provisions only in the Senate bill (S. 1050) include:

- ☆ 3.7 percent across-the-board pay raise for all uniformed service personnel, including targeted raises ranging from 5.25 to 6.25 percent for mid-career servicemembers
- ☆ Continuing the increases in Family Separation Pay and imminent danger pay approved in the FY 2003 Supplemental Appropriations bill
- ☆ \$100 per month assignment incentive pay for servicemembers stationed in Korea
- ☆ Increasing the death gratuity from \$6,000 to \$12,000, effective 9/11/01
- ☆ Reimbursement for full replacement value of household goods damaged in PCS moves*
- ☆ Mandating TRICARE beneficiary counseling assistance coordinators (BCACs) to assist reserve component beneficiaries
- ☆ Directing DoD to conduct market area surveys to ensure the viability of the TRICARE Standard benefit

- ☆ \$30 million to supplement Impact Aid for school districts educating large numbers of military children, plus \$5 million for districts educating military children with severe disabilities
- ☆ Requiring DoD policy guidelines on deployment of dual-military married couple with minor children

Provisions only in the House bill (H.R. 1588) include:

- ☆ Increasing basic pay by an average of 4.1 percent for members of the armed forces, with targeted raises for mid-level and senior noncommissioned officers and select warrant officers, but lower raises for E-1s, E-2s, and O-1s. Commissioned officers in the Public Health Service and NOAA would receive a 2 percent raise (an inequitable provision strongly opposed by NMFA)*
- ☆ A supplemental subsistence allowance for servicemembers assigned to high cost and unique duty locations
- ☆ Limiting increases in Family Separation Pay only to servicemembers in combat zones
- ☆ Increasing flexibility in management of DoD civilian personnel system*
- ☆ Making gray-area Reserve and Guard retirees eligible for federal Long Term Care Insurance
- ☆ Requiring an information outreach and assistance program for TRICARE Standard beneficiaries
- ☆ Requiring DoD to establish a working group to advise the Base Closure and Realignment Commission on the impact of base closings on health care delivery
- ☆ Requiring implementation of certain recommendations of the Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence
- ☆ Allowing military chaplains to use government funds to pay for family members' expenses for marriage and family programs
- ☆ Requiring annual recognition by DoD of the importance of military families
- ☆ \$35 million to supplement Impact Aid

The above is only a partial list of the provisions in S. 1050 and H.R. 1588. To view the bills' texts and track their progress, go to Thomas, the Library of Congress website: thomas.loc.gov.

NMFA Testifies on Quality of Life

On May 15, Joyce Raezer, NMFA's Director of Government Relations, testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. Before discussing the importance of programs to help servicemembers and families deal with issues arising from pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment stressors, Joyce thanked the Subcommittee for supporting the inclusion of increases in Family Separation Pay in the FY 2003 Supplemental Appropriations Act and urged continued funding in the FY 2004 Appropriations. Joyce also called for adequate funding to support quality education for military children both in DoD and civilian schools. In comments during the hearing, Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI), the Subcommittee's Ranking Member, emphasized the importance of the increased Family Separation Pay in times of high deployment.

A copy of NMFA's written statement is available on our website: www.nmfa.org

DoD Updates

What's New in Military OB Care?

Military hospitals, assisted by a joint effort by a TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) and military Services Integrated Process Team, are listening to beneficiaries and adopting new customer-friendly attitude as part of their Family Centered Care initiative. The first phase of this initiative is focused on obstetrical (OB) care. OB care had been identified by many in the military health system as needing both increased resources and significant customer-friendly changes, even before Congress, in the FY 2002 NDAA, eliminated the requirement that TRICARE Standard beneficiaries seek a Nonavailability Statement (NAS) from their local military hospital before obtaining care in the civilian sector.

The quality of OB care was raised as an issue most recently by the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the

Legislative Report

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Services (DACOWITS). DACOWITS has announced it will focus on three areas this year: women's health care, particularly obstetrics-gynecology; military women's retention issues; and military deployment issues.

NMFA is pleased to note the many positive efforts by the military health system to respond to beneficiaries' comments about the care they have received and to direct funds to improve facilities, increase staffing, and organize their clinic operations to better meet the needs of the patient. Among the good news stories shared with NMFA are:

- ☆ TMA held focus groups of military beneficiaries to test new materials describing the military's OB care benefit and Family Centered Care philosophy.
- ☆ Several military hospitals, including Beaumont Army Medical Center at Fort Bliss, TX, are doing more ultrasounds and providing pictures for the mother-to-be to send to the deployed father. Beaumont has also arranged phone hook-ups in the delivery room so that the deployed servicemember can hear the newborn's first cry.
- ☆ Naval Hospital Charleston (SC) is training hospital corps staff in Doula certification (i.e. certification that a woman is trained to provide patient-focused birth support during labor and delivery).
- ☆ Facility improvements, such as the new Women's Health Center at DeWitt Army Hospital at Fort Belvoir (VA), feature modern amenities, and one-stop services for many women's health care needs.
- ☆ A new Stork's Nest at U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka, Japan, provides a safe haven for expectant mothers who live long distances from the hospital.
- ☆ The Navy has increased the availability of private post-partum rooms by 52 percent since 2001.
- ☆ An Air Force pilot program at Nellis AFB (NV) resulted in increased access to care, patient-provider continuity and patient satisfaction.

Information on new initiatives can be found on the TRICARE website at: www.tricare.osd.mil/familycare/default.cf. NMFA encourages family members to look for information on OB care at their local military hospital. Among the changes families might find are: special "stork parking" for pregnant

women, changes in clinic staffing configurations to allow patients to be seen consistently by the same group of providers, one-on-one initial prenatal orientations instead of the "cattle call" sessions, upgraded facilities, lactation support, and personalized pain management. Remember, too, that these initiatives are a work in progress. Watch for more improvements in the future as implementation of the family-centered care concept expands.

More Options/Coverage Under New TRDP

Under a new five-year dental contract, between DoD and the Delta Dental Plan of California, beginning May 1, 2003, dental benefits for uniformed services retirees and family members enrolled in the TRICARE Retiree

Dental Program (TRDP) have been enhanced. Although the scope of benefits and many program rules remain the same, there are some changes, including:

- ☆ The benefit year runs from May 1 through April 30 of each year.
- ☆ The mandatory enrollment period is reduced from 24 to 12 months.
- ☆ Beneficiaries need only be enrolled 12 months before receiving crowns, bridges, and full and partial dentures at 50 percent of the allowable charge. Preventive services are provided during the initial 12-month enrollment period.
- ☆ The annual maximum benefit per enrollee and lifetime maximum benefit for orthodontic care were each increased from \$1,000 to \$1,200.

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News You Can Use


Online help for Returning Servicemembers and Families

The American Psychological Association (APA) is offering online materials to help those returning from deployment, as well as their families. The online brochure, "Homecoming: Resilience After Wartime," points out that even when the war is over, stress and uncertainty can require the skills of resilience both from those coming home, and from those who stayed home. The brochure offers tips that include breaking problems down into manageable chunks, keeping problems in perspective, and relying on strategies used during previous times of stress or trauma. It also includes a warning symptom checklist to help people recognize when stress is not being properly managed.

The homecoming materials are an outgrowth of APA's successful "Road to Resilience" campaign that was launched in response to September 11, 2001. More than 78,000 "Road to Resilience" brochures have been requested since the launch. The resilience materials relating to the war include the Homecoming brochure, as well as print and online versions of "Resilience In A Time of War" brochures aimed at consumers, parents, teachers, and teens. The materials are available at helping.apa.org/resilience/homecoming.html.

IRS Warns of Telephone Scams

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is warning of a telephone scam that targets military families. The scenario can vary, but in general, a caller posing as an IRS employee tells a family member he or she is entitled to a \$4,000 refund because a relative is in the military, then requests a credit card number to cover \$42 for postage. The scam artist gives an IRS toll-free number as a callback number to make the call seem legitimate. Using the credit card number, the scam artist then makes numerous purchases and runs up the credit card bill.

Another scheme is based on e-mail messages that appear to be from the IRS. The messages contain links to a non-IRS Internet page that asks for personal and financial information, which can be used to steal a victim's identity and get access to sensitive financial data or accounts. The IRS wants to remind taxpayers that it does not charge for refunds or solicit credit card information by phone or e-mail. Federal Trade Commission officials advise consumers not to give out a credit card number on the phone when the consumer has not initiated the phone call. 

ASK NMFA

Q I was pleasantly surprised to see Dear Abby answering questions about military spouse employment. What else is new about employment opportunities for military spouses and how can I find out about it?

"Military spouses are a valuable untapped reservoir of talent and resources. We should all recognize the important contributions of military spouses, not only in the lives of their families, but also to our nation. I salute each and every one of you, and support your efforts." What a great endorsement from Dear Abby in her nationally syndicated column in early May 2003. In the article, she was telling a Navy spouse about the partnership between the Department of the Navy and the world wide staffing compa-

ny called Adecco specifically designed for military spouses — active and reserve — who have difficulty finding work because of frequent relocations. More information can be found at the website

www.usadecco.com/careeraccelerator/.

The Department of Defense has set up a new office to attract job applicants to the federal work force. The Defense Application Assistance Office was established in 2003 to help those seeking government positions. To find out more about the program visit www.go-defense.com/ or 888-DoD-4USA.


The Military Spouse Resource Center (www.milspouse.org) is a U.S. Department of Labor sponsored web site. Its mission is to provide easy access to information, resources and opportunities related to edu-

cation, training, and employment. MilSpouse.org will be extending services to military spouses directly through this site and through partnerships with other organizations and the U.S. Department of Labor's local One-Stop Offices.

Now may be the time to revisit the web sites that have been serving military family members for several years:

Military Spouse Career Network:
www.mscn.org

DoD Standard Installation Topic Exchange Service (SITES):
<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/swg/owa/> (this is a secure site for DoD personnel only)

And don't forget your installation family member employment assistance office — always a great resource. 

Members Only Section Now Online at www.nmfa.org

Melony Are, Director, Public Relations, Marketing and Membership

Have you checked out the NMFA web site lately?

In addition to acting as your advocate, NMFA understands how important it is to make a tangible difference for our members. The benefits package for our membership currently includes the following:

- ☆ Monthly NMFA Newsletter, "The Voice for Military Families."
- ☆ Eligibility to join Pentagon Federal Credit Union, a full-service, 24 hour financial institution with experience serving military members worldwide. Visit their web-site at www.penfed.org for further information.
- ☆ A special subscription rate to Army, Air Force, Navy, or Marine Times. \$5.00 of each subscription will come back to NMFA. Call 800-368-5718 for subscription rates and details.
- ☆ Discount with GEICO Direct auto insurance. Call 1-800-MILITARY (800-645-4827) for details. Eligibility for discount


determined by GEICO.

- ☆ NMFA is now providing an online resident connection service for the one-stop consumer purchase of multiple utilities and home-services. To enjoy a hassle-free move or permanent change of station, or to just shop around and compare the rates of major utility providers, go to www.nmfa.org for further information. **
- ☆ Whether traveling for business or pleasure, receive money saving rates and discounts and enjoy the comfort and reliability of renting with the Avis Rent-A-Car System. To rent a car and enjoy all the benefits of a great partnership, call your travel consultant or a reservation specialist at Avis toll free at 800-331-1212 and remember to use your NMFA - Avis Worldwide Discount number: T455800. **
- ☆ Save money on your next vacation through Brennco Travel, a specialist in military travel. Enjoy significant military discounts to destinations around the

globe. Receive the lowest rates and the most amenities giving you more value for your travel dollar. Call 800-211-5107 to speak to their full service travel agents or for a complete list of more than 2,000 reduced-rate cruises, log on to www.militaryrates.net. **

- ☆ Receive a 30% discount on all purchases with Altissimo! Recordings. To find out further information on Altissimo!, the ultimate source for America's greatest military bands, orchestras, and ensembles, check out their web site at www.military-music.com and utilize coupon number: NMFA418 to start receiving your 30% savings on all purchases. **


*** Denotes new benefit*

Check out the Members Only section at www.nmfa.org. Click on the word "here" on the gray bar and enter the following username and password to obtain access to your new "Member Only" section: Username - benefits Password - milfam 

NMFA Hosts Successful Annual Meeting

Melony Are, Director, Public Relations, Marketing and Membership

On April 30, 2003, at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington, VA, Barbara Williams, President, opened the NMFA Annual Meeting by extending a warm welcome to the Board of Advisors (BoA), invited guests, and to the members and staff of NMFA. She introduced three new BoA members: Walter

Hogle, Christopher Jehn, and Phebe Novakovic, and recognized each of the NMFA departments and highlighted their contributions. Williams concluded her remarks by emphasizing the significant milestone NMFA will celebrate at next year's 35 year anniversary gala event. 



The Honorable Rudy de Leon, BoA member, and Barbara Williams, President, NMFA, share thoughts on the future of NMFA.



Carol Cole, Special Event Chair, and Janet Lewin, Board of Governors member, share a moment of reflection at the registration table.



Members and guests engage in discussion prior to the opening remarks of the President at the NMFA Annual Meeting.

Legislative Report

Continued from Page 7

- ☆ An increase to more than 67,000 provider locations in the TRDP network.

Those eligible to enroll in the TRDP include uniformed services retirees and their family members; Medal of Honor recipients and their family members; and survivors and family members of deceased retirees or active duty sponsors who served on active duty for more than 30 consecutive days. Sponsors and

family members who enroll within 120 days of the sponsor's retirement from active duty are covered by the enhanced dental services starting the day they enroll.

The TRDP is a voluntary dental program with enrollee-paid premiums deducted automatically each month from the sponsor's military retired pay. Under the TRDP, there is a \$50 deductible per enrollee, with a \$150 yearly deductible per family. Premiums vary depending on where enrollees live and the number of

family members they choose to enroll. Enrollees may seek dental care from any licensed dentist or specialist within the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U. S. Virgin Islands, America Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Information about the TRDP and a directory of participating Delta Dental providers are available online at www.ddpdelta.org or by calling the Delta Dental Customer Service number at 1-888-838-8737. 

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www.nmfa.org

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JOIN NMFA TODAY

Membership: ☐ \$20: one year (Junior Military: \$15 for current servicemembers with 5 years or less service.) ☐ \$50: three years ☐ \$300: life

☐ Please renew my membership (number _____) in the category designated above

I would like to make a tax deductible, contribution to NMFA:

- ☐ Family Supporter: \$50+ ☐ Family Advocate: \$100+ ☐ Family Guardian: \$250+
☐ Family Patron: \$500+ ☐ Family Champion: \$1,000+

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip + 4 _____

Phone () _____ E-mail _____

Payment: \$ _____ ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Please complete all applicable items for our membership records.
Servicemember **Spouse**

First name: _____

Status _____
 (Active Duty, Retired, National Guard, Reserve, Deceased, Divorced, Widowed, Veteran, Other)

Branch of Service: _____

Rank/Rate, by pay grade: _____

Zip Code where you vote: _____ Number in household: _____

Name of closest military installation: _____

How did you hear about NMFA? _____

*Please complete this form and mail with payment to: National Military Family Association • 2500 North Van Dorn St., Suite 102 • Alexandria, VA 22302 • 703-931-6632
 (Spouse Clubs, Family Centers, and other organizations may contact NMFA for information about membership and donor programs.)*

NMFA Salutes Its Headquarters Volunteers & Representatives

Tanna Schmidli, Director, Volunteer Services and Representatives

NMFA celebrated National Volunteer Week by hosting an Appreciation Bar-B-Que dinner for headquarters volunteers, local representatives, and other NMFA staff members on April 22 at Belvoir on the Greens, Ft. Belvoir, VA. This year we also asked our volunteers' spouses to attend so they, too, could acknowledge the important gift of time given to NMFA.

In the course of the last year, volunteers and volunteer representatives worldwide donated more than 11,928.25 recorded hours worth \$197,293.25 of valuable time and talent in support of the Association. Their dedication allows NMFA to succeed in its mission to serve the families of the seven uniformed services.

The 2003 Heart of Gold Award was presented to Paul Arcari, Government Relations Vice President, Sidney Hickey, former GR Vice President and present GR volunteer, Tom Sims, NMFA Treasurer, and Tom Stanners, Development Vice President. All of the 2003

Heart of Gold Awardees are members of our Board of Governors. The award, established in 1998, recognizes local volunteers who serve five hundred or more hours throughout the year. Previous Heart of Gold winners who also contributed more than 500 hours this past year are Donna Clodfelter, Margaret Hallgren, Cliff Warfield, and Barbara Williams.

We were especially pleased to have a member of the Fort Bragg Representative Team, Kimberly Johnson, accept service year-pins on behalf of all the volunteer Representatives. Those Volunteer Representatives receiving the 3 year pin are: Julie Ann Avila, Julia Barklow, Cynthia Brehm, Lili Carr, Becky Eppler, Connie Fretwell, Dulce Howe, Lynne Lasher, Patricia Laverdure, Sherry Ann Lewis, Karen Severns, Leigh Wear, Beth Webber, Charlotte Wilhelm, Ann Wilkie, Lisa Williams, and Yvonne Williams. Representatives receiving the 5 year pin are: Faith Cowart, Marilyn Croach, Debbie Fryar,



Katie Bioty, Tanna Schmidli and Barney Broughton enjoy a "Kodak Moment" during the April Volunteer Appreciation Bar-B-Que Dinner.

Shawna Morrill, Amy Petrenko, Andrea Dabbs Van Bergen, Kim Vanzwoll, and Darcy Waris.

From all of us at NMFA, thank you for your many hours, your many smiles, conversations and continued loyalty, and most importantly, for being the "heart and soul" of the Association. You are absolutely invaluable! 🇺🇸